

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-1806**

July 20, 2021

Tae Johnson  
Acting Director  
Immigration and Customs Enforcement  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
500 – 12<sup>th</sup> St., S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20536

Dear Acting Director Johnson:

I am extremely concerned about emerging reports of federal authorities dropping off immigrants at airports and bus stops in Baton Rouge and across Louisiana. These detainees are reportedly being released from federal detention centers and transported across the state with little more than what ICE has called a “temporary support plan.” This approach is not only disorganized and illogical, but it also blatantly disregards the well-being and safety of these individuals and the communities they are being bussed to. Given the strain placed on state, local, and non-governmental organizations throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, transferring responsibility for these detainees onto unsuspecting communities is a gross miscarriage of justice.

Let’s get one thing clear: Louisianians don’t know anything about these immigrants and asylum seekers that ICE is bringing into towns and cities across Louisiana. These folks already broke the law by coming here, and while there are legitimate cases of asylum that need to have their day in immigration court, the Administration should continue to enforce the Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP) or the “Remain in Mexico” policy while their cases are pending in the U.S. immigration court system. Transporting people – any of whom could have a violent criminal record or might be carrying COVID-19 – deeper into the interior of our country is a complete contravention of common sense and rationality.

Our immigration system is a mess: the number of enforcement encounters at our Southern border last month increased 450 percent from June 2020. This is the fourth straight month where apprehensions at the southern border have exceeded 170,000, and all signs point to the overwhelming truth that the crisis at the border is getting worse. I’ve said it before and I’ll say it again: it is inconsistent federal policy to deem it illegal for citizens of foreign nations to sneak into our country, but then encourage the creation of a support system at the state and local level that in turn incentivizes more illegal immigration. It is also inconsistent with federal policy to detain people at the borders, transport and hold them at a federal detention center, and then spontaneously bus them somewhere else and release them into this country with no money

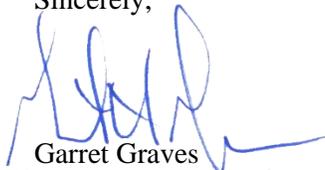
and no clear plan to keep track of where they are. What started as a crisis at our borders has turned into a crisis in our communities.

Therefore, I ask that you provide my office with:

- 1) Information about the number of immigrants and asylum-seekers that have been dropped off by Immigration and Customs Enforcement in Louisiana since January 2020, broken down by city and parish and including information about their criminal records;
- 2) Any planned future transfers of detainees from detention centers to transit facilities in Louisiana, including information about the detainees' criminal records;
- 3) Information about the number of immigrants and asylum-seekers that have been dropped off by ICE in other states since January 2020, including information about their criminal records, broken down by state, city and county;
- 4) The extent to which ICE is or is planning to notify and coordinate with state and local officials on drop-offs of detainees, or an explanation of why such notification has not previously occurred;
- 5) The cost to taxpayers associated with providing translators, food, water, clothing, housing, and other emergency support services to these detainees;
- 6) What steps ICE is taking to track these detainees once they are released from custody and verify that they have either returned to their country of origin or are in the process of having an immigration hearing;
- 7) If ICE plans to notify Members of Congress of future transfer of immigrants from detention centers to transit facilities in their States or districts.

I thank you for your prompt attention to this urgent matter and I respectfully request that you provide answers to the people of Louisiana as soon as possible.

Sincerely,



Garret Graves  
Member of Congress